



To: Labor & Public Employees Committee
From: Leo Paul, First Selectman
Date: January 29, 2015
Re: **HB-5070 AN ACT CONCERNING TIMETABLES FOR MUNICIPAL BINDING ARBITRATION.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in *support* of **HB-5070**.

Establishing strict timetables for municipal binding arbitration by eliminating the option to modify, defer, or waive negotiation deadlines would assist towns in managing municipal budgets. This would also be consistent with the Teachers Negotiation Act, which was modified to ensure that the terms of collective bargaining agreements are finalized before the existing agreements expire. This helps teachers, boards of education and taxpayers in making sound decisions regarding proposed budgets.

HB-5070 would make the Municipal Employees Relations Act (MERA) consistent with the Teachers Negotiation Act, as recommended by the legislature's Program Review & Investigations Committee in 2006. This report recommended requiring both parties in an expired collective bargaining agreement to file the mandatory timetable for arbitration outlined in Connecticut General Statute 7-473(c).

This is a small change but will help improve the efficiency of the municipal budget process.